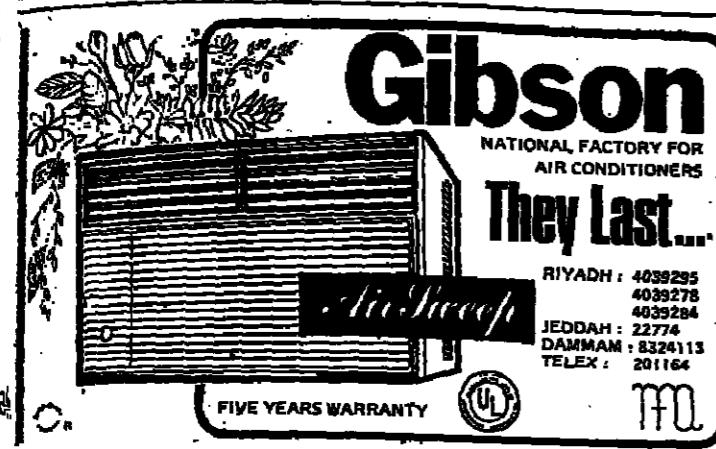


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EIGHT PAGES — TWO RIVALS

Carter hints U.S. after ties with Iran

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio, Oct. 21 (AP) — President Jimmy Carter said here Monday that the United States was prepared to resume normal relations with Iran once the 52 American hostages held since last Nov. 4 were freed.

Questioned by Youngstown residents during a campaign appearance here, Carter said that once the hostages were released, he would immediately annul measures freezing Iranian assets in the United States and lift the trade embargo directed against Iran.

The president said that it was to the advantage of the United States "to have a strong, independent and peaceful Iran."

Carter said: "If Iran should release the hostages, then I would unfreeze their assets, which are several billions of dollars. I would stop the embargo on trade with Iran and work toward a resumption of normal commerce with Iran in the future."

Shipments of military spare parts and other equipment was halted and billions of dollars in assets of the Iranian government were frozen in the United States after the seizure of the hostages.

Monday's promise was the latest in a series of recent conciliatory statements by administration officials toward Iran. Both Carter and Secretary of State Edmund S. Muskie expressed concern Monday about keeping Iran from being dismembered as a result of the current war between Iran and neighboring Iraq.

In a speech to a gathering in Chicago, Muskie reaffirmed American impartiality in the conflict, but he appeared for the first time to hold Iraq responsible for the outbreak of hostilities.

But Supplying Iran with weapons for the sake of facilitating the release of the U.S. hostages would be tantamount to American entry in the war, Iraq's foreign minister was quoted as saying in Kuwait Tuesday.

"The hostage issue should not serve as an opportunity for the United States to become involved in the war through supplying Iran with arms," Iraq's Foreign Minister Saadoun Hammadi was quoted as saying by the newspaper *Al-Quds*.

"What interests us is that the United States refrain from becoming a participant in the conflict through supplying Iran with arms. If it did so this would mean it has entered the war," Hammadi was quoted as adding.

And Iran's Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Rajai reiterated Tuesday there would be no negotiations with the United States "even to get spare parts," the Iranian news agency, Fars, said.

Iraqi tanks still pounding at Abadan

BEIRUT, Oct. 21 (AP) — Iraq said its forces hammered the gates of Iran's oil refining city of Abadan with relentless tank assaults Tuesday as air force jets of the two warring Gulf nations traded bombing raids. Iran said Abadan's hardpressed garrison repulsed escalating enemy forays against the city's main entrance at the Bahmanshir River bridge and claimed two districts at the northern edge of the warfront were recaptured by Iranian helicopter-borne paratroopers, killing 150 Iraqi troops.

An Iraqi military communiqué broadcast by Baghdad radio claimed 38 Iranians were killed in the last 12 hours of fighting around Abadan and in house-to-house fighting in the neighboring port of Khorramshahr on the eastern coast of Shatt Al Arab waterway. It conceded 24 Iraqis killed.

Tunisian mediator Habib Chatti, secretary general of the 40-nation Organization of Islamic Conference, said in Tehran, Iran had not slammed the door yet on his proposal to set up a mediation mission of Islamic heads of states to halt the war and get the adversaries to the negotiating table.

"They're (Iranian leaders) still talking to me and that means there is still a glimmer of hope," Chatti said in a statement distributed by the secretariat of the Islamic conference and reported by Beirut newspapers. "I am still waiting for an official response to my proposal."

Chatti laid down his proposal to Iran's religious leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini at an audience Monday and the 80-year-old patriarch said it was all right for an Islamic heads of state mission to come to investigate Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's "crime" against Iran.

Chatti's statement indicated he did not take Khomeini's response as Iran's final answer. Iran's eight-man supreme defense council, which assumed exclusive charge of the conduct of the war last week, was still to meet and decide on Chatti's proposal.

Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr heads the council, which includes among others Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Rajai. Bani-Sadr vowed to stay in the embattled Khouzestan province until victory is achieved, Tehran radio reported.



VISIT: King Khaled here meets with Guinea's president, Ahmed Sékou Touré, center, during the pilgrimage.

Khaled meets Iraq minister

JEDDAH, Oct. 21 (SPA) — King Khaled received the Iraqi Finance Minister Thamer Razouk at his office here. The meeting was attended by Crown Prince Fahd, Prince Abdullah, second deputy premier and head of the National Guard, Prince Sultan, defense minister, and Sheikh Muhammad Aba Al Khal, minister of finance and national economy. Razouk left for home Tuesday.

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Al-Sheikh lauds public cooperation**Civil Defense units drown Mina fire**

MECCA, Oct. 21 (SPA) — Public Security Director Gen. Abdullah Al-Sheikh said a fire that broke out in Mina Sunday was caused by a gas-cooking stove exploding in a tent. The wind and other factors fed the flames until the fire expanded to more than a kilometer.

Civil Defense units, assisted by helicopters and pilgrims, fought the blaze. Citizens helped by carrying water from water trucks stationed there for the purpose. About the casualties, Gen. Al-Sheikh said, "Some deaths have occurred, but it has not been clear whether they were caused by the fire or the fire was one of the factors that led to the deaths."

Some of the deceased pilgrims were old people, and the fire broke out at a time when the pilgrims were physically exhausted, he added. They had spent the previous day standing at the hajj in the plain of Arafat between the Nahr mosque and the Jabal Al-Rahimah (Mount of Mercy). They did not sleep most of the night, especially those who walked from Arafat to Muzdalifa. Early the next morning, they performed other parts of the pilgrimage that included stoning the Shaitan (symbolic of the Satan) and going to Mecca to circulate around the Kaaba seven times.

"Most of those injured in the fire had just returned from Mecca," Gen. Al-Sheikh said, "and it is possible that some had died of asphyxiation." There has been no official report yet, but it is possible that three persons were killed by suffocation, he added.

On the possibility of abandoning the use of tents by building concrete structures in the holy places, Gen. Al-Sheikh said, "This idea has been under consideration for a long time now. Especially since during the next 15 years the pilgrimage will come in the summer season when the heat is at its climax."

The Kingdom's officials already have such a project in mind. But the project requires deep and detailed studies. The project should comprise simple two- or three-story buildings constructed with fire-resistant material. At minimum, the land granted to pilgrim guides, government and official institutions will be fenced. That way, the expansion of fire in any of these zones could be prevented or controlled.

In addition, Gen. Al-Sheikh said the decision to ban cars that carry less than nine passengers

has been completely applied, except for some special cases. These cases covered families who came from remote areas and said they did know of the ban. "However," he said, "They were informed that the ban was allowed for the last time, after Interior Minister Prince Naif agreed to their entrance."

The plan was applied following comprehensive and detailed studies by all parties involved in the pilgrimage. The plan was given enough publication through the press, television and radio. "The interior minister explained the aim of applying the decision in a television seminar so that the whole population would be aware of it," Gen. Al-Sheikh said.

He said the studies, in which the Traffic Department and the Pilgrimage Research Center took part, revealed that small cars make up 85 per cent of the total number of cars in the pilgrimage. At the same time, they serve only 15 per cent of the total number of

pilgrims, while the bigger vehicles transport 85 per cent.

The entrance of small car would hinder fighting fires. An official survey put the number of cars that take part in the pilgrimage at 25,228 small cars. "What would have happened if this number of cars were in Mina the day of the fire? Civil Defense units wouldn't have intervened in the way they did Sunday."

The public security director compared Sunday's fire with one that occurred a few years before. "The major cause in the expansion of the fire before the ban was the difficulty facing fire engines and other Civil Defense units unable to reach the fire early because of the congestion," Gen. Al-Sheikh said.

Pilgrims immediately responded to the appeal to evacuate the fire area, he added. "They all helped in fighting the fire, and con-

trolling it by removing tents built in the wind's direction," he said. The precautions also played an effective role. Civil Defense units found more than 50 fire extinguishers belonging to pilgrims and were used in fighting the fire.

He lauded the cooperation and active participation of citizens. "It is an indication of better awareness which we hope will be a greater part of pilgrims in future," the public security director said.

On Prince Naif's call to pilgrims to devote themselves to performing the pilgrimage and refrain from practicing any political activity that would affect the security of the pilgrimage, Gen. Al-Sheikh said pilgrims responded favorably. "The proof is that no actions harming security have occurred, and all pilgrims performed their religious obligation with ease," he said.



(Arab News photo)
FINAL DAY: Tuesday was the final day of the pilgrims' three-day stay at Mina, which followed the great hajj at the Plain of Arafat. During the three-day period, pilgrims performed the symbolic throwing of stones at Satan.

(Arab News photo)
ATTENTIVE: King Khaled received leaders of Islamic delegations, who had arrived to perform the pilgrimage, at the royal palace in Mina Monday.

Abdo Yamani attends gathering Muslim press honored

MINA, Oct. 21 (SPA) — Minister of Information Dr. Muhammad Abdo Yamani attended a function held by his ministry here Monday to honor the press delegations that took part in the coverage of Pilgrimage events.

After a recitation from the Holy Koran, a member of the Australian Muslim Federation spoke about the spread of Islam in that continent and said the number has now reached a quarter of a million Muslims. He commended the Kingdom's support for Australian Muslims and hoped that an Islamic school would be opened there for the benefit of Muslim children.

In a speech, an American Muslim said he was proud of being present on this momentous occasion. He prayed that God bring the Muslims to one platform.

On behalf of the media delegations, the leader of the Senegalese media delegation thanked King Khaled, Crown Prince Fahd, and Dr. Yamani for their kind hospitality, and expressed appreciation of the government.

men's task in facilitating the Pilgrimage for the guests of God. He condemned Israel's decision to make Jerusalem its capital and described the decision as an "ignoble crime." He also urged the Arab and Islamic world to dedicate all their energies for the liberation of Jerusalem and other occupied lands.

Dr. Yamani expressed his thanks for the efforts of media men in giving broad coverage to the pilgrims' movement from Arafat to Muzdalifa and back to Mina. He said the Monarch himself followed the coverage on the radio and admired the spiritual description of this great event.

The minister said he was happy to meet the Australian Muslims and told them that the King has already ordered a study on the Islamic school, which would be opened in Australia at the personal expense of the King.

Dr. Yamani hoped Muslims would be united, so God enable them to liberate Holy Jerusalem from the hold of the Zionists who have displaced the Palestinians from their hearth and homes.

Minister reiterates dignity in upholding Islamic duties

MINA, Oct. 21 (SPA) — Minister of Pilgrimage and Endowments Sheikh Abdul Wahab Abdul Wasie has reiterated that Muslims will have to realize solidarity and uphold the message of Pilgrimage and Jihad for the sake of the nation's dignity and victory.

The minister, who was speaking at an Islamic seminar here Monday, urged that the large gathering be exploited to discuss the conditions of Muslims and to find solutions that help them in realizing their aspirations.

He was followed by Ahmed Al-Hamani, chief of the Algerian ulema, who spoke of the

Saudi Arabian Press Review

In an editorial Tuesday, Okaz observed that the success of the Pilgrimage this year was a practical translation of the government's keenness to carry out its obligations toward Islam and Muslims in the best possible manner. The facilities provided to the pilgrims and the arrangements made by the state have been clearly felt and appreciated by the pilgrims, it said.

The paper added that the state's unceasing concern for better services to the Guests of God and its plans to open up new projects at the Pilgrimage sites to further facilitate the performance of religious obligations provide evidence of the state's full cohesion with the faith. The Kingdom feels honored to serve the Muslims not only during the Pilgrimage season but, in fact, at all times and places through its tireless efforts to boost the Islamic propaganda, it said.

The fact that top officials of the state

Jihad of Muslims against the infidels at the dawn of Islam. He said the aim of those holy wars was to bring victory to Islam.

A former Afghan Minister, Abdul Sattar, now a professor at King Abdul Aziz University, highlighted the real significance of the Pilgrimage, which he said brought Muslims before their responsibilities toward God, themselves and their brethren, particularly at this decisive stage of the nation's history.

Jordanian Minister of Pilgrimage and Islamic Affairs Kamel Sherif thanked the Saudi Arabian government for its efforts in facilitating the Pilgrimage.

Colorburst instant cameras

inspect the Pilgrimage arrangements in a chain of visits to the sacred sites speaks well of their sincere commitment to serve the Pilgrimage to their entire satisfaction, it said. It added that Saudi Arabia invariably finds itself committed to serve the faith and to work at all levels to unite Muslims and their stances, so they are able to realize their aspirations and triumph over the Zionists and the heretics.

The paper noted that the pilgrims have noticed and admired the many services rendered them during the Pilgrimage and a number of projects that have been either completed or are under implementation to further facilitate them perform the duty to God in greater ease and comfort. The state, on its part, does not hesitate to dedicate all its energies and potentialities to uphold the dignity of Muslims and to keep the banner of Islam fluttering high, it said.

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Protest rejection of appeal

Exiled Arab mayors go on hunger strike

JERUSALEM, Oct. 21 (Agencies) — Two West Bank Palestinian mayors went on a hunger strike after learning that they had lost their appeal against expulsion from the West Bank, the Israeli military government said Tuesday.

The mayors, in custody in an Israeli customs terminal on the Jordan River while their appeals are considered, were taking water only, a spokesman said.

Their families demonstrated outside the official residence of Prime Minister Menahem Begin in Jerusalem demanding that he overrule the military government and let the mayors come home.

They waved placards saying "in the name of humanity release our fathers." Police quickly dispersed the demonstration, Israel radio said, giving no details.

The demonstration came a few hours after Begin was to meet with two other Arab mayors, Elias Freij of Bethlehem and Rashid al-Shawa of Gaza, who intend to plead for a reversal of the expulsion order.

The two departed from a long-standing refusal by Palestinians under occupation to meet with Begin because, Freij said, the case had unusual humanitarian aspects.

Mayors Fahd Qawasmeh of Hebron and Muhammed Milhem of Halhoul were expelled from the West Bank six months ago in reprisal for a Palestinian ambush that killed six Jewish settlers in Qawasmeh's town.

The expulsion drew international rebuke and the United States believes that by letting the mayors come home, Israel would advance Mideast peace prospects.

The mayors' lawyer Felicia Langer said here Tuesday that the military governor had upheld the expulsion orders.

Mrs. Langer visited the mayors Tuesday at the Allenby Bridge across the Jordan River where they have been held since they came from Jordan on Oct. 14 to lodge their appeals. She said she would consider appealing to

the Israeli supreme court after a planned meeting between Begin and the mayors of Gaza and Bethlehem.

"We have been fighting for six months. Now I have lost all hope," said Mrs. Yusra Qawasmeh, the mayor's wife, her face red and swollen with tears.

Reached at home in Hebron, Qawasmeh's 15-year-old son Khalid told a reporter the family did not trust the supreme court but was appealing anyway "to show the world that we've tried everything possible to have them come back."

If the Hebron mayor is not allowed to return, "I will be very miserable, this is my father," Khalid said.

Israeli newspapers reported that the government was likely to go along with Monday's ruling by Brig. Gen. Binyamin Eliezer, the West Bank occupation chief, upholding the expulsion.

If Begin, in his capacity as defense minister and overseer of occupation matters, does not let the mayors come home, they have until Wednesday to appeal to the Israeli supreme court.

Eliezer based his decision on the recommendation of an Israeli appeals board which heard Qawasmeh and Milhem swear that they disavow violence and will not disturb the peace if they are allowed home.

Israeli newspapers disagreed on whether the mayors should be allowed to return to the West Bank.

The mass-circulation *Maariv* implied that it did not support the expulsion in the first place. "But now that Israel had done it, it had to stick by its decisions."

Maariv warned against "a policy of zig-zags," saying that if Israel changed its policy now, the world would see the original expulsion order as "hasty, ill-conceived and ill-considered."

The influential *Haaretz*, on the other hand, saw no threat to Israel's security in the return of Qawasmeh and Milhem.

Election of Reagan to delay M.E. peace talks, Egypt says

CAIRO, Oct. 21 (R) — Egypt's Deputy Foreign Minister Boutros Ghali has said the election of Ronald Reagan as U.S. president would probably put back the timetable for Middle East peace talks.

Ghali Monday told the semi-official newspaper *Al-Ahram* he expected a Camp David-style summit and other low-level negotiations on Palestinian autonomy would be postponed if the Republican candidate won the presidential elections on Nov. 4.

The summit was originally planned for later this year, but Egyptian Vice-President Hosni Mubarak has since spoken of the powers and responsibilities to be transferred to a self-governing Palestinian authority on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Ghali said that if Reagan were elected pres-

ident "We would have to take into account changes in the U.S. autonomy negotiating team and find out how the new administration intends to deal with the Middle East."

But he added that Egypt did not expect a sudden change of style. "American policy is based on interest rather than on the personality of the president," he said.

In a related development, Sol Linowitz, President Carter's Middle East negotiator said that Egyptian, Israeli and U.S. negotiators have agreed on 80 per cent of the powers and responsibilities to be transferred to a self-governing Palestinian authority on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Ghali said that if Reagan were elected pres-



Fahd Qawasmeh

U.N. panel condemns Israel over Jerusalem

BELGRADE, Oct. 21 (AP) — A UNESCO commission has voted to "vigorously condemn" Israel for trying to "Judaize" the city of Jerusalem and make it Israel's "eternal capital."

Israel, the United States and Canada were the only nations to vote against the resolution. European nations and a large bloc of Latin American nations abstained, and a large number of countries were absent. The exact vote was 78 for the resolution, 28 abstentions and 41 absent.

Despite the vote totals, the debate was by and large more restrained in tone than in past moves to condemn Israel at the U.N. educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The vote was taken Monday in the Culture and Communications Commission of the U.N. agency. The resolution's approval by the full 21st General Conference was expected to be little more than a formality.

After a similar debate last week, UNESCO's Educational Commission voted to censure Israel for its education policies in the occupied territories. That resolution too was expected to be approved by the full conference.

The draft resolution approved Monday, submitted by Gabon and a group of 36 other African and Arab nations, was similar to one adopted at the 1978 UNESCO General Conference, though this year's additionally singled out the Begin government's decision to make Jerusalem the "eternal capital" of Israel.

It specifically said that Israel through its housing and archeological policies, was endangering the "cultural identity" of the city, especially the Islamic neighborhoods and monuments.

Jordan said in the debate that this decision was "the last link in the chain of annexation" of the holy city, and accused Israel of acting like a "spoiled child, a frustrated child."

"The conscience of the world, as represented by UNESCO, will not remain silent, the Jordanian delegate said.

Israel and the United States, on the other hand, charged that this delicate political issue should be addressed at the United Nations and was not within the mandate of UNESCO.

R.J. Zwi Werblewski, speaking for Israel, claimed that the resolution was not based on the findings of an official UNESCO study.

The Israeli delegate quoted from a report to UNESCO by Prof. Raymond Lemaire, of the University of Louvain, France, regarding excavations. "All work has stopped on the excavation sites."



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Arab news Middle East

Gulf war seen straining Syrian-Iraqi relations

BEIRUT, Oct. 21 (R) — The relationship between Syria and Iraq has reached a low point as a result of Syria's bitter opposition to its neighbor's war with Iran. Syrian officials interviewed in Damascus recently said the war had set back the cause of Arab unity and, without openly siding with Iran, put the blame squarely on Iraq for starting the hostilities.

Relations between the two countries have gone downhill since the middle of last year when tentative plans toward unity between Syria and Iraq after a decade of hostility were set back by Iraqi charges that Damascus planned a coup against Iraq's newly-appointed President Saddam Hussein.

The rivalry stems from friction between the opposing factions of the pan-Arab Socialist Baath Party which rule Syria and Iraq and the desire of both President Hussein and Syria's president Hafez Assad to become leaders of the Arab world.

A month before the Gulf war broke out relations took a major turn for the worse when Iraq ordered out Syrian diplomats based in Baghdad. The Iraqi government claimed arms and explosives destined for internal subversion had been found at the Syrian embassy.

In the third week of the war, Iraq ordered the embassy closed down completely after alleging Damascus was secretly sending supplies to Iran.

Syrian officials deny the shipments and the public policy of Damascus is that the war should end so that the Arab countries can concentrate on their confrontation with Israel. But criticism of Iraq has become more strident as the war drags on into its fifth week.

Speaking on behalf of President Assad at a recent air force parade, Defense Minister Mustafa Tlas said: "Saddam Hussein enthusiastically rushed to carry out this dirty war which serves only the Zionist enemy and American imperialism, thereby rendering the biggest service to the enemies of the Arab nation and drawing the hostility of the friendly Iranian revolution."

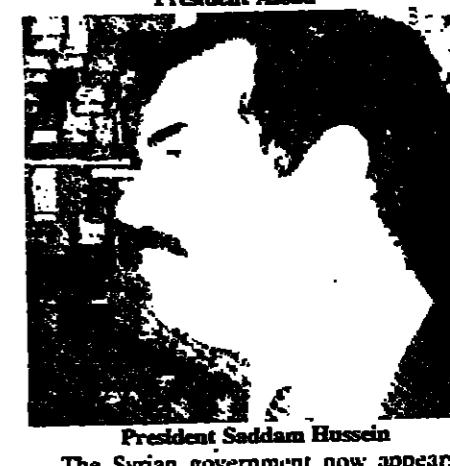
Informal sources in Damascus noted, however, that the government had refrained from attacking Iraq's declared motive for the war, which was to regain Arab land. One official, expressing the government line, said Iraq had chosen the wrong time to press its case as well as the wrong methods.

He noted that Syria had shelved its claims to the Turkish Mediterranean border province of Iskenderun until the overall Middle East crisis, involving Israel and the Palestinians, was settled.

Syria has allied itself with Iran since the revolution that toppled the Shah in February, 1979, but officials still describe Iraq as a sister country.

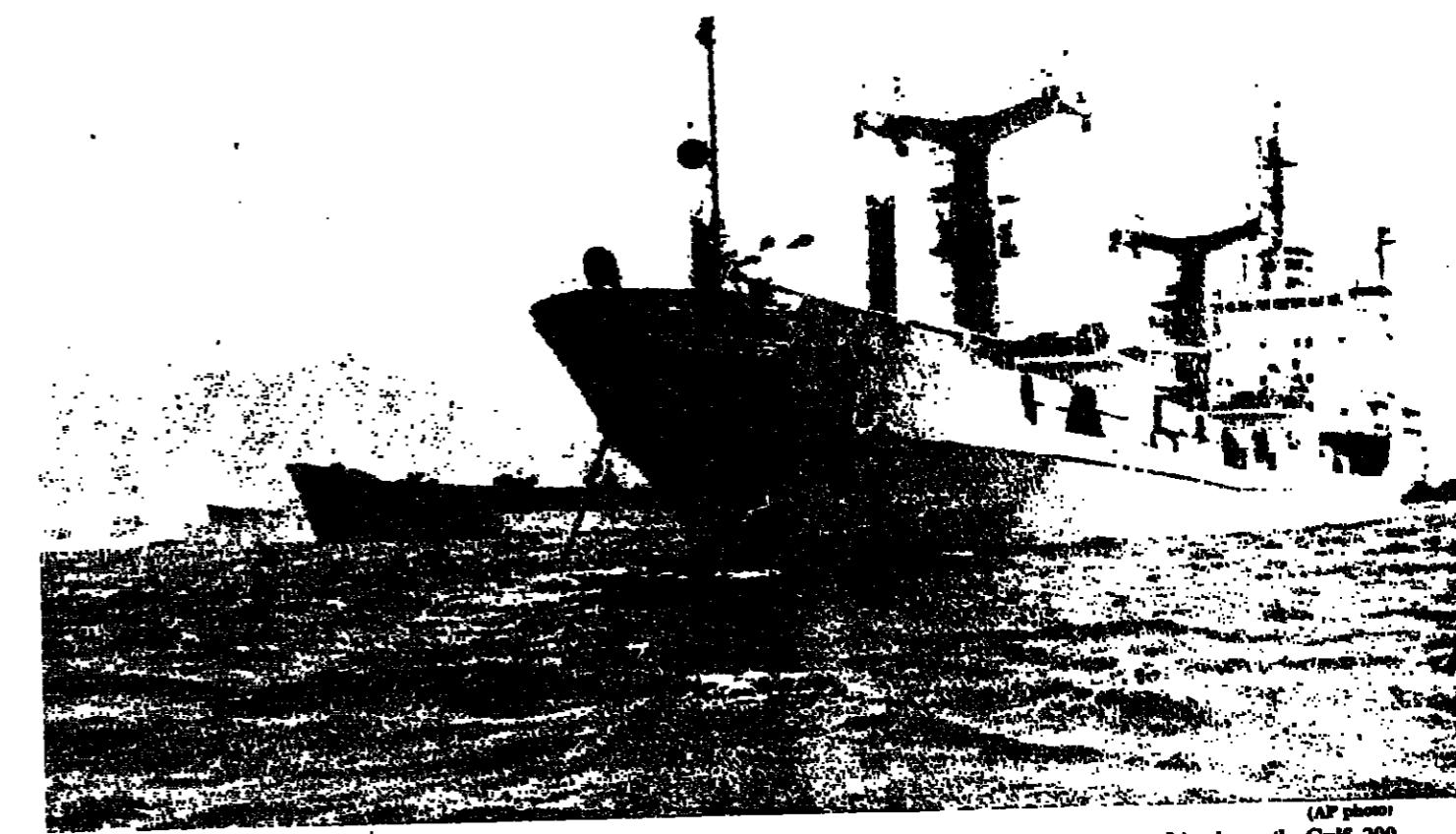


President Assad



President Saddam Hussein

The Syrian government now appears less concerned than it was six months ago by the dangers of internal dissent and has been boosted by its recent treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union.



SOVIET SHIP: This picture taken on Oct. 15, shows a Soviet cargo ship transporting wood, in the port of Aqaba on the Gulf, 200 kilometers south of Amman. (AP photo)

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Comptroller delays A-1000 cruise

**Comptroller won't
said uncertain
despite 33% cut**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21 (UPI) — Delays in delivery on some aircraft and electronic equipment have caused a month's slippage in the A-1000 cruise program, Defense Department officials said.

However, project officials said they expect to meet their target date for delivery of the weapons in December.

The sources, who declined to be named, said there are no problems with the aircraft itself, but instead with controls and parts of equipment for the missile system essential to operation of the A-1000. The nuclear-tipped weapon, which can carry a total of 400 ground-penetrating missiles, is to be deployed in Thailand, and other Western European countries to counter the threat posed by the Soviet Union's growing arsenal of intermediate ballistic missiles — including the SS-20.

One official close to the project said that despite the slip, the A-1000 is expected to meet its initial operating date in December 1987.

He said the effect of the 33% cut would be to slow down by about a month the air force's test and evaluation of the weapons system. But project officials said some "elbow room" had been cut from the schedule and for that reason they were able to meet the key objective of delivery on time.

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International

Walesa faces dissent

Polish labor demands strike

he said, citing Solidarity's statutes, belonged to the coordination committee, the federation's executive board.

Delegates then were asked to leave the room, to allow the committee to deliberate. As it began, Walesa rushed out to attend a meeting in nearby Katowice, where 10,000 people helped him resume his triumphal tour of southern Poland.

A majority of the 150 delegates from 37 local unions belonging to Solidarity, Walesa's nationwide federation, wanted to set a date for the next work stoppage to protest Warsaw's delay in granting them registration, and hence official recognition.

Walesa, who last week said strikes could be called only as a last resort, declined to accept the majority's views, arguing that the delegates meeting in this southern coal-mining center near the Czechoslovak border had no right to decide the matter. That prerogative,

The disagreement surprised most observers, coming as it did on the heels of Walesa's highly successful tour of the region. In many towns, he has been carried on residents' shoulders, with thousands of marchers singing

the tune "may he live 100 years."

The first-ever workers' parliament, as it had been billed, thus ended with an obvious warning for Walesa, a moderate who appeared to face a stern challenge from a radical wing within Solidarity that seemed to want more and quicker, movement toward official recognition and higher pay.

Speculation as to whether Walesa could control this faction was rife, and appeared of the utmost importance for the future of Poland. The possibility of wildcat strikes thus could no longer be discounted, observers noted, despite government appeals for productivity increases and other Warsaw Pact countries' discouraging, even vaguely threatening statements about continuing chaos.

The 30-member committee spent an hour debating, but could agree only to resume their discussions next Monday in Gdansk. The meeting ended in confusion, with some of the dissenting delegates waiting outside.

The disagreement surprised most observers, coming as it did on the heels of Walesa's highly successful tour of the region. In many towns, he has been carried on residents' shoulders, with thousands of marchers singing

Japanese nix Soviet ship claim

TOKYO, Oct. 21 (AP) — Japan has turned down a Soviet claim to ownership of the czarist battleship *Admiral Nakhimov*, sunk in the Korean strait in the Russo-Japanese war of 1905. A Japanese salvage team claims there are thousands of precious metal ingots in the wreck.

Japan's foreign ministry rejected the Soviet claim, saying that the *Admiral Nakhimov* and its cargo are a war trophy. The rejection was made by Nagao Hyodo, chief of the foreign ministry's first East European affairs division, when he met with George E. Komarovskii, counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in Tokyo.

The Soviet Union on Oct. 3 claimed ownership of the 8,524-ton vessel and its cargo, sunk by the Japanese fleet under Adm. Heihachiro Togo in the battle of Tsushima on May 27-28, 1905.

On Oct. 4, Ryōichi Sasagawa, sponsor of the private company which is salvaging the ship, offered to exchange the treasure for four northern islands the Soviet Union seized from Japan at the end of World War II. Nippon Marine Development Co. recovered a 10-kilogram ingot, reportedly of platinum, from the vessel in September and has salvage rights to the ship's treasure.

Hyodo said it was clear that the *Admiral Nakhimov* was captured by the Japanese Imperial Navy during the war. Under established wartime international law, the ownership of a captured warship as well as its cargo is transferred to the captor country immediately and ultimately, they said.

The statement said that the recent Soviet claim to the Russian ship was "groundless and could not be accepted by Japan," officials said. The Soviet diplomat was quoted by ministry officials as saying that the Soviet Union reserves the right to refute the Japanese argument.

It has long been rumored that the Russian battleship was carrying a fortune in precious metals when it went down. One estimate puts the present-day value of the haul at \$1.4 billion to \$4.5 billion.

The vessel lies almost intact, some 96 meters below the surface. The salvage work is expected to cost about \$1.4 million, the company said.

Divers have already brought to the surface several platinum ingots, and a survey of the wreck has hardly begun. Crews descend in a heavy-duty bathyscaphe built to withstand high water pressure.



TOUCH OF WINTER : Snow clings to the Rocky Mountain foothills around Loveland Pass, Colorado, after mid-autumn storms last week. Denver and other front range cities were dusted, and more snow was predicted.

Million-dollar venture

3 plan Pacific balloon flight

TOKYO, Oct. 21 (AP) — Four men plan a million-dollar venture next year to be the first to cross the Pacific ocean by balloon. Ben Abruzzo and Larry Newman, the first to cross the Atlantic in their *Double Eagle II* balloon in 1978, will make the Pacific attempt next April over a course which will be twice as long — about 9,600 kms from Tokyo to California.

They will be accompanied by Rocky Aoki, a Japanese businessman who has made a fortune with a chain of restaurants in the United States and balloon enthusiast Ron Clark, a property dealer.

"The crossing of the Pacific by balloon is one of the few adventures that have never been attempted before," Abruzzo told newsmen here. He will captain the balloon.

The four plan to leave Tokyo in April, when there are favorable winds, in a balloon filled with helium gas, at an altitude of from 9,000-10,500 meters, swept along by subtropical winds between 30-40 degrees latitude north.

As the winds above the Pacific are very much stronger than Atlantic winds, the balloon is expected to hit speeds of from 50 to 70 knots.

The trip is expected to last from three to four days, compared to the five days taken by *Eagle I* to cross the Atlantic from Maine, in the U.S., to Marsey, north of Paris. The four men have all stressed that the wind alone is not enough to get across the Pacific. Just as important in their view is their state of "superb physical fitness," their taste for risk

and the best possible radio and communication equipment.

The balloon's cabin will have several types of radio which will link up with ships, radio hams and the Nimbus-6 satellite. Abruzzo said, "There is a risk but we have nine chances out of ten of success."

In case of accident in flight, the fliers will be able to jettison the balloon with an explosive system and the cabin will use a safety parachute to drift down to the sea. The cabin holds a 30-day emergency food ration for use until they are rescued by a ship.

The whole operation is expected to cost one million dollars, but that presents no problem. Rocky Aoki estimates that they should net from three to five million dollars from the American mass media, the National Geographic Society and the sales of their books which will follow.

"We are not doing this for money," Larry Newman stresses, "but for the love of adventure."

All four men have a lot of ballooning experience, while Abruzzo and Newman hold many world balloon records. All have six months to reach a peak of fitness and get used to being together in close confinement, while also obtaining the necessary American and Japanese documentation for flight permission.

There have never been any manned balloon flights across the Pacific, but during World War II the Japanese sent light bombs and propaganda pamphlets towards the United States by this means.

British pound highest since 1974

LONDON, Oct. 21 (AP) — Gold was mixed and the dollar fell against most major currencies Tuesday. The British pound hit its highest level against the dollar in 6 1/2 years, reaching \$2.44 in early trading.

Gold opened in Zurich at \$654.50 an ounce, down from \$656.50 at the close Monday and lost another dollar in later trading. In London, it opened at \$655.50 up from \$651 at the close Monday.

The strong British currency, buoyed by North Sea oil and high interest rates under Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government, rose more than 1 1/4 cents from \$2.4240 at the close Monday.

A Bank England spokesman said sterling was at its highest level since April 30, 1974, when it cost \$2.4415.

Gold opened in Zurich at \$654.50 an ounce, compared with \$656.50 at the close Monday, and shed another dollar in later trading.

Silver traded in London on Tuesday at \$19.62 an ounce, compared with \$19.75 at the close Monday.

Mrs. Gandhi denies India isolated

NEW DELHI, Oct. 21 (R) — Prime Minister Indira Gandhi Tuesday defended the performance of her nine-month-old government and denied that India was isolated on the international scene.

Mrs. Gandhi, holding her first big press conference since returning to power last January, said she was astonished that people used words like drift and non-performance to describe her government. Production was increasing, inflation was slowing down, and the law and order situation was "slightly better though far from satisfactory," Mrs. Gandhi said.

Mrs. Gandhi said it was nonsense to say that India was isolated on the international scene. "People are still coming to us for consultations. Many have changed their policies because of our attitude, this is good enough certificate for us," she said.

In an apparent reference to foreign policy



VISITOR : Afghan President Babrak Karmal is escorted past an honor guard at Moscow Airport by President Leonid Brezhnev. Karmal is on tour of the Soviet Union.

aggression — a formula both Moscow and Kabul use to cover the anti-government insurgency in Afghanistan.

Karmal flew to Tbilisi, capital of Georgia, where he was expected to be given similar treatment, and from there he was due to travel back to Leningrad in the north before returning home.

A joint Soviet-Afghan statement issued Sunday night and front-paged by *Pravda* Monday indicated that the Kremlin intends to do all in its power to ensure the survival of Marxist rule in Afghanistan. In a blunt message to Western and Islamic countries that no settlement would be countenanced by the Kremlin that did not maintain Karmal in

power, the statement said:

"... No plans affecting the sovereignty of the people or the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan or disregarding its legitimate government would be a success."

A date for a Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan could be examined only when all aggression had ended against that country, it said, indicating that there will be no pull-out in the conceivable future.

Pledging continued Soviet assistance to Afghanistan, possibly covering an increased military commitment there, the statement said Karmal's government would "further count on solidarity and the internationalist aid of the Soviet people."



JET PRINT : The powerful telescope camera at Lockheed Solar Observatory, near Los Angeles, recorded this photo of the passage of a jetliner across the sun. The observatory photographs the sun every 10 seconds.

Tremors shake El Asnam; last week's toll disputed

ALGIERS, Oct. 21 (Agencies) — Three new tremors overnight shook the western Algerian city of El Asnam, devastated 11 days ago by an earthquake which killed thousands of people.

Several damaged buildings eventually collapsed following the latest shocks, the Algerian news agency said Tuesday. It did not report any new casualties.

Meanwhile, conflicting totals are still reaching here for the number of people left dead, injured or homeless by the Oct. 10 quake. The first official toll — announced as

partial and provisional — was published last Sunday by the national coordinating committee assigned to organize relief work: 2,325 bodies counted, 7,725 injured registered and 331,216 homeless.

Those figures were far lower than those furnished by the central hospital at El Asnam, which four days after the quake said that more than 6,000 persons had died in the city. Last Thursday, the daily *El Moudjahid* quoted official health services in reporting 44,000 people hurt, 4,000 of them being serious cases.

The official figure is also far below the estimate of the Algerian Red Crescent organization, which has repeatedly suggested that the toll will reach 20,000 dead.

The national coordinating committee has said its figures are subject to variation as relief work continues. Official sources here also point out that figures are not yet in from the six hard-hit dairas (administrative districts) surrounding El Asnam.

Furthermore, many victims, particularly in outlying villages, were buried by their families, with no report having reached the authorities.

Mrs. Gandhi criticized Pakistan's President Zia-Ul-Haq for trying to make an international issue of communal riots in northern India last summer when more than 170 people killed in violence sparked by clashes between Muslims and police in Moradabad.

She said anti-nationalist forces, including a few separatists, were encouraging a year-long anti-immigrant agitation in the northeastern state of Assam. Secessionist and communal tendencies must be controlled and sabotage dealt with firmly.